

Appl. No. 10/006,878
Amdt. dated July 7, 2004
Reply to Office action of May 3, 2004

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS:

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of the pending claims. If the Examiner feels that a telephone conference would expedite the resolution of this case, he is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned.

The drawings were objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). It was noted in the office action that "each comparator having a first input and a second input, a threshold voltage coupled to the first input and the second input coupled to a bus signal from both said first and second buses" as noted in claim 9 was not shown in the drawings. Applicants respectfully traverses the objection in view of the amendment to claim 9 (see below). Looking at FIG. 3 which shows an individual one of the plurality of comparator units shown in FIG. 4 there is shown a comparator (150) including a first input (-, or inverting input in this example) coupled to a threshold voltage (145), the second input of the comparator (+, non-inverting input) is shown coupled to bus B via resistor R2 and line 154 and to bus A via resistor R3 and line 152. In this illustrative example, similar bus signals found in each of the first and second busses (busses A and B) such as the clock signal (SCL) from the A and B busses (SCL (A) in line 152 and (SCL (B) in line 154) is coupled to the non-inverting input of comparator (150) via resistors R3 and R2 respectively. Fig. 4 shows a full implementation of a bus bridge in accordance with an embodiment of the invention. Given these comments and the amendment to the claim language of claim 9, it is believed that the objection is overcome. If the Examiner still feels there is an issue with the drawings, it is requested that the Examiner contact the undersigned in order to quickly resolve any outstanding issues.

Claims 9-14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Claim 11 was also rejected based on a lack of positive antecedent basis for "said threshold" on line 1. Claim 9 has been amended to clarify the claim, as amended it is believed that claim 9 is in condition to overcome the noted rejection.

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Claim 9 has been amended to recite that each of the plurality of comparators has one input coupled to a threshold voltage (see FIG. 3, item 145) and the second input of each of the comparators is coupled to one of the bus signals that is similar amongst the first and second busses (for example as shown in FIG. 3, the clock signal from both busses (SCL (A) from the A bus and the similar bus signal from bus B (SCL (B))). Claim 11 has been amended to correct for the noted antecedence issue and as amended is believed to be in condition for allowance. Dependent claims 10, 12-14 are also believed to be in condition for allowance given that they add further nonobvious features to claim 9.

Claims 1, 7, 8 and 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Schutte, U.S. Pat. No. 6,038,623. Claim 18 was also rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Gephardt et al., U.S. Pat. No. 5,625,829. Claim 1 has been cancelled in order to expedite prosecution of this application. Claims 7 and 8 have been amended to now depend on claim 2, claims 7 and 8 are therefore believed to be in condition for allowance. Claim 18 has been amended to now recite a bridge including a plurality of cross-coupled comparator units that determine whether the first or second bus is actively asserting a bus signal and driving said signal on the other of said first or second buses. Neither the Schutte nor the Gephardt et al. references taken individually or in combination teach or suggest such a feature, as such, claim 18 is believed to be in condition for allowance.

Claims 2-6 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected claim. Claim 2 has been rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and as such is believed to be in condition for allowance. Claims 3-6 add further nonobvious limitations to claim 2 and are therefore also believed to be in condition for allowance.

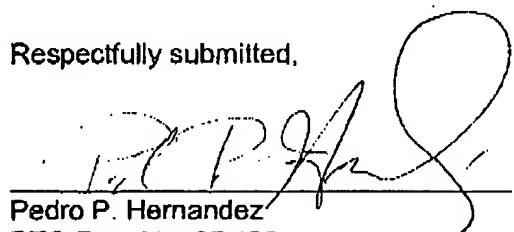
In the course of the foregoing discussions, Applicants may have at times referred to claim limitations in shorthand fashion, or may have focused on a particular

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claim element. This discussion should not be interpreted to mean that the other limitations can be ignored or dismissed. The claims must be viewed as a whole, and each limitation of the claims must be considered when determining the patentability of the claims. Moreover, it should be understood that there may be other distinctions between the claims and the cited art which have yet to be raised, but which may be raised in the future.

Applicants respectfully request that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case. If any fees or time extensions are inadvertently omitted or if any fees have been overpaid, please appropriately charge or credit those fees to Hewlett-Packard Company Deposit Account Number 08-2025 and enter any time extension(s) necessary to prevent this case from being abandoned.

Respectfully submitted,



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